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BOMBASTES
FURIOSO
—
CRUIKSHANK



Malone Adds J. 159.





Begone, brave army, and don't kick up a row.

BOMBASTES FURIOSO;

A BURLESQUE TRAGIC OPERA,

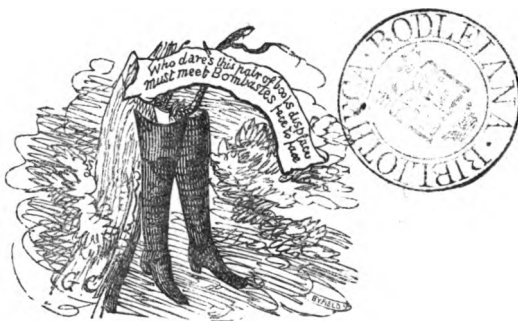
IN ONE ACT.

*First performed at the Theatre Royal, Haymarket,
August 7, 1810.*

BY WILLIAM BARNES RHODES :

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY

GEORGE CRUIKSHANK.



LONDON :

BELL AND DALDY, YORK STREET,
COVENT GARDEN.

1873.



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TOOKS COURT, CHANCERY LANE.



ADVERTISEMENT.

HE very powerful effect produced by the inimitable acting of the several Performers in the following dramatic trifle, is sufficiently known by the highly flattering reception it met with ; and had the Author considered his part equally deserving the applause so liberally bestowed upon it, an edition long before this would have been given to the public : yet, however deficient it may be in point of composition, the very objectionable light in which the spurious copies lately issued from the press have placed it, will, he trusts, be deemed a sufficient apology for its now being printed as it was first performed.

LYONS INN,

October 21, 1822.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

ARTAXOMINOUS, *King of Utopia* . MR. MATTHEWS.

FUSBOS, *Minister of State* . . . MR. TAYLOR.

GENERAL BOMBASTES MR. LISTON.

Attendants { MR. TREBY.
MR. NORRIS.

DISTAFFINA MISS H. KELLY.

Drummer, Fifer, and Soldiers.

* * *The lines to which inverted commas are prefixed, were omitted after a few nights' repetition.*





BOMBASTES FURIOSO.

SCENE I.

Interior of the Palace.

ARTAXOMINOUS *in his Chair of State; a Table set
out with Bowls, Glasses, Pipes, &c.;
Attendants on each side.*

TRIO—(*Tekli*).

FIRST ATTENDANT.



W HAT will your Majesty please to wear?
Or blue, green, red, black, 'white, or
brown?

SECOND ATT. D'ye choose to look at the
bill of fare?

ARTAX. Get out of my sight, or I'll knock you down.

SECOND ATT. Here is soup, fish, or goose, or duck,
or fowl, or pigeons, pig, or hare ;

FIRST ATT. Or blue, or green, or red, or black, or
white, or brown.

What will your Majesty, &c.

ARTAX. Get out of my sight, &c.

[*Exeunt Attendants.*]

Enter FUSBOS, and kneels to the King.

FUS. Hail, Artaxominous ! ycleped the Great !
I come, an humble pillar of thy state,
Pregnant with news—but ere that news I tell,
First let me hope your Majesty is well.

ART. Rise, learned Fusbos ! rise, my friend, and know
We are but middling—that is, but *so so*.

FUS. Only *so so* / O monstrous, doleful thing !
Is it the mulligrubs affects the king ?
Or, dropping poisons in the cup of joy,
Do the blue devils your repose annoy ?

ART. Nor mulligrubs, nor devils blue, are here,
But yet we feel ourself a little *queer*.

FUS. Yes, I perceive it in that vacant eye,
The vest unbutton'd, and the wig awry ;
Ungarter'd hose, with slippers down at heel,
And beard unconscious of the biting steel :
So sickly cats neglect their fur-attire,
And sit and mope beside the kitchen fire.

ART. Last night, when undisturb'd by state affairs,
Moist'ning our clay, and puffing off our cares,
Oft the replenish'd goblet did we drain,
And drank and smoked, and smoked and drank again ;
Such was the case, our very actions such,
Until at length we got a drop too much.

FUS. " So when some donkey on the Blackheath road
" Falls, overpower'd, beneath his sandy load ;
" The driver's curse unheeded swells the air,
" Since none can carry more than they can bear.

ART. " The sapient Doctor Muggins came in haste,
" Who suits his physic to his patient's taste ;
" He, knowing well on what our heart is set,

"Hath just prescribed 'to take a morning wet;'"
The very sight each sick'ning pain subdues,
Then sit, my Fusbos, sit, and tell thy news.

FUS. Gen'ral Bombastes, whose resistless force
Alone exceeds by far a brewer's horse,
Returns victorious, bringing mines of wealth!

ART. Does he, by jingo? then we'll drink his health.

FUS. "In vain their numbers faced our gallant few!
"Scarce had your *sable*-guards appear'd in view,
"When all the crowd of *scarecrow-onians* yield,
"And leave their ragged banners in the field.
"So when a debtor, whose exploring eyes
"Afar in some high street a dun espies,
"Through lanes and courts he takes his well-known
way,
"Nor stops to parley when he cannot pay."
But hark! with loud acclaim the fife and drum
Announce your army near; behold, they come!



For which we make you Duke of Strombelo.

*Enter BOMBASTES, attended by one Drummer, one Fifer,
and two Soldiers, all very materially
differing in size.*

BOM. (*to army*). Meet me this evening at the Barley-
mow ;

I'll bring your pay, you see I'm busy now :
Begone, brave army, and don't kick up a row.

[*Excunt Soldiers.*]

BOM. (*to the King*). Thrash'd are your foes—this
watch and silken string,

Worn by their chief, I as a trophy bring ;
I knock'd him down, then snatch'd it from his fob ;
"Watch, watch," he cried, when I had done the job :
"My watch is gone," says he—says I, "Just so ;
"Stop where you are—watches were made to go."

ART. For which we make you Duke of Strombelo ;
[*BOMBASTES kneels ; the King dubs him with
a pipe, and then presents the bowl.*]

From our own bowl here drink, my soldier true ;
And if you'd like to take a whiff or two,

He whose brave arm hath made our foes to crouch,
Shall have a pipe from this our royal pouch.

BOM. Honours so great have all my toils repaid !
My Liege, and Fusbos, here's "Success to trade."

FUS. Well said, Bombastes ! since thy mighty blows
Have given a quietus to our foes,
Now shall our farmers gather in their crops,
And busy tradesmen mind their crowded shops ;
The deadly havock of war's hatchet cease ;
Now shall we smoke the *calumet* of peace.

ART. I shall smoke short-cut, you smoke what you
please.

BOM. Whate'er your Majesty shall deign to name,
Short cut or *long*, to me is all the same.

BOM. & } In *short*, so *long* as we your favours claim,

FUS. } *Short* cut or *long*, to us is all the same.

ART. Thanks, gen'rous friends ! now list whilst I
impart

How firm you're lock'd and bolted in my heart :
So long as *this here* pouch a pipe contains,
Or a full glass in *that there* bowl remains,

To you an equal portion shall belong ;
This do I swear, and now—let's have a song.

Fus. My Liege shall be obey'd.

BOM. Fusbos, give place,
You know you haven't got a singing face ;
Here, nature smiling, gave the winning grace.

SONG.

BOMBASTES.

Hope told a flatt'ring Tale.

Hope told a flattering tale,
Much longer than my arm,
That love and pots of ale
In peace would keep me warm :
The flatt'rer is not gone,
She visits number one :
In love I'm monstrous deep,
Love ! odsbobs, destroys my sleep.

Hope told a flattering tale,
Lest love should soon grow cool ;

A tub thrown to a whale,
To make the fish a fool :
Should Distaffina frown,
Then love's gone out of town ;
And when love's dream is o'er,
Then we wake and dream no more.

[*Exit.*

[*The King evinces strong emotions during the song, and at the conclusion starts up.*

FUS. What ails my Liege? ah! why that look so sad?

ART. (*coming forward*). I am in love! I scorch, I freeze, I'm mad!

O tell me, Fusbos, first and best of friends,
You, who have wisdom at your fingers' ends,
Shall it be so, or shall it not be so?
Shall I my Griskinissa's charms forego,
Compel her to give up the regal chair,
And place the rosy Distaffina there!
In such a case, what course can I pursue?
I love my Queen, and Distaffina too.

Fus. And would a King his General supplant ?
I can't advise, upon my soul I can't.

" ART. So when the vessel man is toss'd about
" Upon that ocean call'd the ' sea of doubt,'
" Now safe he rides, and then on danger's brink ;
" Nor can he tell if he's to swim or sink.

" Fus. So, when two roads a weary traveller spies,
" And knoweth not on which his journey lies,
" At once he stops, and seems in doubtful plight,
" Since *this* may lead him wrong, and *that* not right."

ART. So when two feasts, whereat there's nought
to pay,

Fall unpropitious on the self-same day,
The anxious Cit each invitation views,
And ponders which to take or which refuse :
From *this* or *that* to keep away is loth,
And sighs to think he cannot dine at both. [Exit.

Fus. So when some schoolboy, on a rainy day,
Finds all his playmates will no longer stay,
He takes the hint himself, and walks away. [Exit.

SCENE II.

*Another Apartment in the Palace.**Enter ARTAXOMINOUS.*

ARTAXOMINOUS.

 I'LL seek the maid I love, though in my way
A dozen gen'als stood in fierce array !
Such rosy beauties nature meant for kings ;
Subjects have treat enough to see such things.

. *The comic Song introduced in this place by Mr. MATTHEWS, not being written by the author of the Piece, he is under the necessity of apologizing for its omission.*



SCENE III.

Inside of a Cottage.

Enter DISTAFFINA.

DISTAFFINA.

 HIS morn, as sleeping in my bed I lay,
I dreamt (and morning dreams come true,
they say),

I dreamt a cunning man my fortune told,
And soon the pots and pans were turn'd to gold !
Then I resolved to cut a mighty dash ;
But, lo ! ere I could turn them into cash,
Another cunning man my heart betray'd,
Stole all away, and left my debts unpaid.

Enter ARTAXOMINOUS.

And pray, sir, who are you, I'd wish to know ?

ART. Perfection's self ! O smooth that angry brow,

For love of thee I've wander'd through the town,
And here have come to offer half a crown.

DIS. Fellow ! your paltry offer I despise ;
The great Bombastes' love alone I prize.

ART. He's but a Gen'ral—damsel, I'm a King ;

DIS. O Sir ! that makes it quite another thing.

ART. And think not, maiden, I could e'er design
A sum so trifling for such charms as thine.
No ! the half crown that tinged thy cheeks with red,
And bade fierce anger o'er thy beauties spread,
Was meant that thou shouldst share my throne and
bed.

DIS. (*aside*). My dream is out, and I shall soon
behold
The pots and pans all turn to shining gold.

ART. Here on my knees (those knees which ne'er
till now
To man or maid in suppliance bent) I vow
Still to remain, till you my hopes fulfil,
Fixt as the Monument on Fish-street hill.

DIS. And thus I swear, as I bestow my hand,

As long as e'er the Monument shall stand,
So long I'm yours—

ART. Are then my wishes crown'd?

DIS. La! Sir, I'd not say no for twenty pound:
Let silly maids for love their favours yield,
Rich ones for me—a king against the field.

SONG.

DISTAFFINA.

Paddy's Wedding.

Queen Dido at
Her palace gate
Sat darning of her stocking O;
She sung and drew
The worsted through,
Whilst her foot was the cradle rocking O.

(For a babe she had
By a soldier lad,
Though hist'ry passes it over O;)

“ You tell-tale brat,
“ I’ve been a flat,
“ Your daddy has proved a rover O.

“ What a fool was I
“ To be cozen’d by
“ A fellow without a penny O
“ When rich ones came,
“ And ask’d the same,
“ For I’d offers from never so many O.

“ But I’ll darn my hose,
“ Look out for beaus,
“ And quickly get a new lover O ;
“ Then come, lads, come,
“ Love beats the drum,
“ And a fig for Æneas the rover O.”

ART. So Orpheus sung of old, or poets lie,
And as the brutes were charm’d, e’en so am I.
Rosy-cheek’d maid, henceforth my only queen,
Full soon shalt thou in royal robes be seen ;

And through my realm I'll issue this decree,
None shall appear of taller growth than thee :
Painters no other face pourtray—each sign
O'er alehouse hung shall change its head for thine.
Poets shall cancel their unpublish'd lays,
And none presume to write but in thy praise.

[DISTAFFINA *produces a bottle and glass.*

DIS. And may I then, without offending, crave
My love to taste of this, the best I have ?

ART. Were it the vilest liquor upon earth,
Thy touch would render it of matchless worth ;
Dear shall the gift be held that comes from you ;
Best proof of love (*drinks*), 'tis full proof Hodges too :
Through all my veins I feel a genial glow,
It fires my soul——

BOM. (*within*). Ho, Distaffina, ho !

ART. Heard you that voice ?

DIS. O yes, 'tis what's his name,
The General ; send him packing as he came.

ART. And is it he ? and doth he hither come ?

Ah me ! my guilty conscience strikes me dumb :
Where shall I go ? say, whither shall I fly ?
Hide me, oh hide me, from his injured eye !

DIS. Why, sure you're not alarm'd at such a thing !
He's but a General, and you're a King.

[ARTAX. *secretes himself in a closet.*

Enter BOMBASTES.

BOM. Lov'd Distaffina ! now by my scars I vow,
Scars got—I haven't time to tell you how ;
By all the risks my fearless heart hath run,
Risks of all shapes from bludgeon, sword, and gun,
Steel traps, the patrolle, bailiff shrewd, and dun ;
By the great bunch of laurels on my brow,
Ne'er did thy charms exceed their present glow !
O let me greet thee with a loving kiss—
Hell and the devil !—say who's hat is this ?

DIS. Why help your silly brains, that's not a hat.

BOM. No hat ?

DIS. Suppose it is, why what of that ?
A hat can do no harm without a head !



Hell and the devil !—say whose hat is this ?

BOM. Whoe'er it fits, this hour I doom him dead ;
Alive from hence the caitiff shall not stir—

[*Discovers the King.*

Your most obedient, humble servant, sir.

ART. O General, O !—

BOM. My much-loved master, O !

What means all this ?

ART. Indeed I hardly know——

DIS. You hardly know !—a very pretty joke,
If kingly promises so soon are broke !

Arn't I to be a queen, and dress so fine ?

ART. I do repent me of the foul design ;
To thee my brave Bombastes I restore
Pure Distaffina, and will never more
Through lane or street with lawless passion rove,
But give to Griskinissa all my love.

BOM. No, no, I'll love no more ; let him who
can

Fancy the maid who fancies every man.

In some lone place I'll find a gloomy cave,

There my own hands shall dig a spacious grave,

Then all unseen I'll lay me down and die,
Since woman's constancy is—all my eye.

TRIO.

O Lady Fair!

DIS. O cruel man! where are you going?
Sad are my wants, my rent is owing.

BOM. I go, I go, all comfort scorning;
Some death I'll die before the morning.

DIS. Heigh O, Heigh O! sad is that warning:
O do not die before the morning!

ART. I'll follow him, all danger scorning;
He shall not die before the morning.

BOM. I go, I go, &c.

DIS. Heigh O, Heigh O, &c.

ART. I'll follow him, &c. [*Exeunt.*]





I'll follow him, all danger scorning.

SCENE IV.

*A Wood.**Enter FUSBOS.*

FUSBOS.

 HIS day is big with fate : just as I set
My foot across the threshold, lo ! I met
A man whose squint terrific struck my view ;
Another came, and lo ! he squinted too :
And ere I'd reach'd the corner of the street,
Some ten short paces, 'twas my lot to meet
A third who squinted more—a fourth, and he
Squinted more vilely than the other three.
Such omens met the eye when Cæsar fell,
But caution'd him in vain ; and who can tell
Whether those awful notices of fate
Are meant for Kings, or Ministers of State ?
For rich or poor, old, young, or short or tall,
The wrestler Love trips up the heels of all.

SONG.

My Lodging is on the cold Ground.

My lodging is in Leather-lane,
A parlour that's next to the sky ;
'Tis exposed to the wind and the rain,
But the wind and the rain I defy :
Such love warms the coldest of spots,
As I feel for Scrubinda the fair ;
O she lives by the scouring of pots,
In Dyot-street, Bloomsbury-square.

O was I a quart, pint, or gill,
To be scrubb'd by her delicate hands,
Let others possess what they will
Of learning, and houses, and lands ;
" My parlour that's next to the sky
" I'd quit, her blest mansion to share ;
" So happy to live and to die
" In Dyot-street, Bloomsbury-square.

" And O would this damsel be mine,
" No other provision I'd seek ;
" On a *look* I could breakfast and dine,
" And feast on a *smile* for a week."
But ah ! should she false-hearted prove,
Suspended I'll dangle in air ;
A victim to delicate love,
In Dyot-street, Bloomsbury-square.

[*Exit.*

Enter BOMBASTES, preceded by a Fifer, playing
" Michael Wiggins."

BOM. Gentle musician, let thy dulcet strain
Proceed—play Michael Wiggins once again,—
Music's the food of love ; give o'er, give o'er,
For I must batten on that food no more.
My happiness is changed to doleful dumps,
Whilst, merry Michael, all thy cards were trumps.
So, should some youth by fortune's blest decrees
Possess at least a pound of Cheshire cheese,
And bent some favour'd party to regale,

Lay in a kilderkin, or so, of ale ;
Lo ! angry fate, in one unlucky hour
Some hungry rats may all the cheese devour,
And the loud thunder turn the liquor sour.

[Forms his sash into a noose.

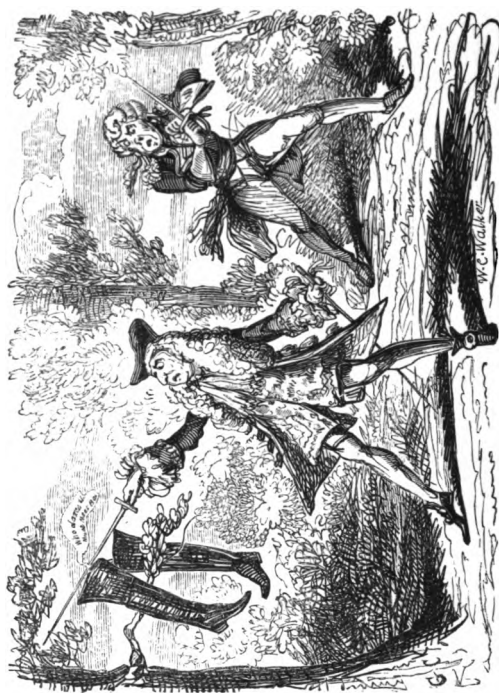
Alack ! alack ! alack ! and well-a-day,
That ever man should make himself away ;
That ever man for woman false should die,
As many have, and so, and so—wont I ;
No, I'll go mad ! 'gainst all I'll vent my rage,
And with this wicked wanton world a woful war I'll
wage.

*[Hangs his boots to the arm of a tree, and, taking
a scrap of paper, with a pencil writes the
following couplet, which he attaches to them,
repeating the words—*

“ Who dares this pair of boots displace,
“ Must meet Bombastes face to face.”

Thus do I challenge all the human race.

[Draws his sword, and retires up the stage.



Ha ! dost thou dare me, vile obnoxious elf.

Enter ARTAXOMINOUS.

ART. Scorning my proffer'd hand he frowning fled,
Cursed the fair maid, and shook his angry head.

[Perceives the boots and label.

“ Who dares this pair of boots displace,
“ Must meet Bombastes face to face.”

Ha ! dost thou dare me, vile obnoxious elf ;
I'll make thy threats as *bootless* as thyself :
Where'er thou art, with speed prepare to go
Where I shall send thee—to the shades below !

[Knocks down the boots.

BOM. (*coming forward*). So have I heard on Afric's
burning shore,
A hungry lion give a grievous roar ;
The grievous roar echoed along the shore.

ART. So have I heard on Afric's burning shore
Another lion give a grievous roar,
And the first lion thought the last a bore.

BOM. Am I then mock'd ? Now by my fame I swear

You shall soon have it—There ! *[They fight.]*

ART. Where ?

BOM. There and there.

ART. I have it sure enough—Oh ! I am slain,
I'd give a pot of beer to live again ;
Yet, ere I die, I something have to say :
My once loved Général, prithee come this way !
Oh ! Oh ! my Bom— *[Falls on his back.]*

BOM. bastes he would have said ;
But ere the word was out his breath was fled.
Well, peace be with him, his untimely doom
Shall thus be mark'd upon his costly tomb :—
“ Fate cropt him short—for be it understood,
“ He would have lived much longer—if he could.”
[Retires again up the stage.]

Enter FUSBOS.

FUS. This was the way they came, and much, I fear,
There's mischief in the wind—what have we here ?
King Artaxominous bereft of life !
Here'll be a pretty tale to tell his wife.

BOM. A pretty tale, but not for thee to tell,
For thou shalt quickly follow him to hell ;
There say I sent thee, and I hope he's well.

FUS. No, thou thyself shalt thine own message bear ;
Short is the journey, thou wilt soon be there.

[*They fight.*]

DUET.

(*Weipper's Fancy.*)

BOM. " I'll quickly run you through,

FUS. " No, hang me if you do,

" I think I know a trick can equal two of that ;

" My sword I well can use,

" So mind your Ps and Qs :

BOM. " I thank you, Sir, but I must caution you of
that."

(*Lord Cathcart's Favourite.*)

FUS. " 'Tis a pleasure to fight

" With a man so polite,

" Then hear in return what I'll do, Sir ;

" I'll take down aught you'll say
" In the will-making way,
" And be your Executor too, Sir.

BOM. " O, Sir, there's no need
" For so friendly a deed,
" But I hope for yourself you're provided ;
" Since your worldly affairs
" Will devolve to your heirs,
" As soon as the point is decided,
" Then come on while you can,
" Meet your fate like a man—
" Bombastes shall ne'er be derided."

BOM. O Fusbos, Fusbos, I am diddled quite,
Dark clouds come o'er my eyes, farewell, good night !
Good night ! my mighty soul's inclined to roam,
So make my compliments to all at home.

[Lies down by the King.]

FUS. And o'er thy grave a monument shall rise,
Where heroes yet unborn shall feast their eyes ;



O Fusbos, Fusbos, I am diddled quite.

And this short Epitaph, that speaks thy fame,
Shall also there immortalize my name :—
“ Here lies Bombastes, stout of heart and limb,
“ Who conquer’d all but Fusbos—Fusbos him.”

Enter DISTAFFINA.

Dis. Ah, wretched maid ! O miserable fate !
I’ve just arrived in time to be too late :
What now shall hapless Distaffina do !
Curse on all morning dreams, they come so true.

Fus. Go, beauty, go, thou source of woe to man,
And get another lover where you can :
The crown now sits on Griskinissa’s head ;
To her I’ll go——

Dis. But are you sure they’re dead ?

Fus. Yes, dead as herrings—herrings that are red.

FINALE.

Dis. Briny tears I’ll shed,

Art. I for joy shall cry too ;

Fus. Zounds ! the King’s alive ;

Bom. Yes, and so am I too.

DIS. It was better far

ART. Thus to check all sorrow ;

FUS. But if some folks please,

BOM. We'll die again to-morrow.

DIS. Tu ral, lu ral, la,

ART. Tu ral, lu ral, laddi ;

FUS. Tu ral, lu ral, la,

BOM. Tu ral, lu ral, laddi.

[*They take hands and dance round, repeating*

"Tu ral, lu ral, la," &c.

THE END.

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